

Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEA-10 IO-14 NIC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 SSO-00 NSCE-00

AF-10 DRC-01 INRE-00 /158 W
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R 290700Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7180

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USUN NEW YORK 165

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 1451

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, BU

SUBJECT: BULGARIAN REACTION MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

1. BULGARIAN PRESS CONTINUES COVER MIDDLE EAST CRISIS FAIRLY STRAIGHT BUT WITH OBVIOUS TILT TO MOSCOW POSITION. SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE COVERED WITH SELECTED EXCERPTS PUBLISHED FAITHFULLY. OCTOBER 27 PRESS CARRIES FULL TEXT OF BREZHNEV'S SPEECH AND REACTIONS IN WESTERN CAPITALS. TASS STATEMENT NOT IN MORNING PRESS.

2. SINCE BEGINNING OF CRISIS, MIDDLE EAST STORY HAS BEEN OVER SHADOWED IN PRESS BY OTHER EVENTS, SUCH AS ZHIVKOV'S FOREIGN TRAVELS OR SPEECHES. HE IS NOW IN NORTH KOREA AND COVERAGE DOMINATES PRESS. INTERESTINGLY, UNTIL LAST TWO OR THREE DAYS CHILEAN COUP AND AFTERMATH CONTINUED TO RECEIVE ABOUT AS MUCH COVERAGE AS MIDDLE EAST. WESTERN DIPLOMATS PUZZLED AS TO WHY BULGARS ARE MAINTAINING SUCH A LOW PROFILE, INCLUDING HEAD OF STATE, DEFENSE MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTERS ABSENTING THEMSELVES FROM COUNTRY DURING SUCH A SERIOUS INTERNATIONAL CRISIS.

3. AT SERIES OF SOCIAL FUNCTIONS LAST NIGHT (OCTOBER 26), US-SOVIET
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CONFRONTATION AND SOVIET BACKDOWN WAS BROADLY DISCUSSED. ROMANIAN

AMBASSADOR TOOK CHARGE ASIDE TO STRESS IMPORTANCE ROMANIANS ATTACH TO THEIR PROPOSAL FOR CEASE-FIRE AND SETTLEMENT IN MIDDLE EAST AND TO INFORM THAT ROMANIA HAS IN NO WAY PARTICIPATED IN MIDDLE EAST CRISIS INCLUDING NOT PERMITTING OVER FLIGHTS. ON OTHER HAND, YUGOSLAV AMBASSADOR BEHAVING MORE CAUSTICALLY THAN USUAL, SUGGESTED TO CHARGE THAT REASON FOR ALERT WAS BECAUSE OF US INTERNAL PROBLEMS. CHARGE REMINDED HIM OF THE SECRETARY'S REPLY TO THIS SUGGESTION WHEN RAISED DURING HIS PRESS CONFERENCE. AMBASSADOR THEN HARANGUED ON BLINDNESS OF US POLICY WHICH DOES NOT TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION ITS BROADER INTERESTS IN AREA. FINALLY AGREED THAT US WAS ACTING IN ARAB INTEREST AS WELL. BULGARS WITH WHOM EMBOFFS SPOKE AVOIDED MAKING COMMENTS ON MIDDLE EAST EXCEPT TO ASK FOR LATEST INFORMATION AND EXPRESS HOPE SITUATION NOW UNDER CONTROL. NATO COLLEAGUES ALL EXPRESSED ADMIRATION FOR WAY US HAS HANDLED WHOLE SITUATION.
BATJER

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